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PRACTICE NOTE

Exercise Design: The City and County of San Francisco, California's Design Team

PRACTICE

The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF) Office of Emergency Services (OES) uses the Incident Command System (ICS) to determine the composition of its exercise design team. This ensures that all CCSF primary and support agencies participating in an exercise are involved in the planning process.

DESCRIPTION

In October 2005, the CCSF OES conducted Fast Track, a full-scale terrorism exercise simulating multiple detonations of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The exercise was designed to test CCSF departments' familiarity with ICS and area command, their ability to effectively manage mass casualties, and their use of an incident communications plan. Following Fast Track, city exercise planners noted that certain agencies were critical to achieving exercise objectives yet played a small role in the exercise conduct. Planners concluded that these agencies would have played a larger role had they participated in the design and development of the exercise.

The OES reconfigured future exercise design teams to reflect the ICS structure of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). All CCSF primary and support agencies with response and recovery roles are represented in the ICS branches of the EOC. For subsequent exercises, the OES invited a liaison from each agency to participate in the exercise design team and to coordinate agency participation.

This design-team structure guarantees adequate input from all primary and support CCSF departments and agencies during the exercise design process. It also ensures that all departments within the CCSF are aware of upcoming exercises.

CITATIONS

McKinley, Michael. San Francisco Office of Emergency Services. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*, 23 Aug 2006.

San Francisco Office of Emergency Services and Homeland Security. *After Action Report: Fast Track—Part II: Full-Scale Exercise*. 12 Oct 2005.

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